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ABSTRACT

This paper looks at state-level reform efforts during the past decade, focusing particularly on teacher competency assessment policies. Six questions were addressed: (1) How restrictive are state policies beyond coursework for entering the teaching profession? (2) How do states vary on restrictions for entry to the teaching profession? (3) Are there regional patterns of policy restrictiveness? (4) What do the findings suggest about the relation of political groups and structure to policy restrictiveness? (5) Are there patterns of state characteristics associated with restructive policies, and do these vary by region? and (6) What do the findings suggest about the professionalization of teaching? Results revealed that states with the most restrictive policies are those where the policymaking process is dominated by a unified political elite, where the proportion of black students in the public schools is high, and where valuation of education is low. In most states, the application of restrictiveness across policy measures was inconsistent. Finally, professional educators are not associated with policy restrictiveness. (Author/JD)

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State Characteristics Associated with Policies Restricting Entry to Teaching

By Marilyn Scannell

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State Characterisitics Associated with Policies Restricting Entry to Teaching

By Marilyn Scannell

Paper prepared for the 1988 AERA Annual Meeting

Session scheduled on Friday, April 8, 12:25-1:55

Those of us concerned with the teaching profession should be heartened by the current potential for changing the nature of reform efforts related to teaching. I began data collection for this study when the nation's policymakers were reacting to criticisms contained in A Nation At Risk. The publication and public acclaim of the Carnegie report, A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century suggests the nature of teaching reform efforts may be changing from reactive policies by state level policymakers to proactive steps on the part of groups with a vested interest in the teaching profession.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, proposed in the above-cited Carnegie Report and established in 1987, was created to develop "rigorous, valid assessments to see that certified teachers" meet standards developed by the Board that define what teachers need to know and be able to do. Among the benefits to be reaped by the teaching profession as a result of the work of this National Board, according to the Report, is that "the profession will find itself, for the first time, in control of the definition of what it means to be a professional teacher." Further, the Report states: "As the

high standard set by the Board becomes widely known, public confidence in teachers will rise."

Teacher assessment as a means of achieving public confidence is not a new idea. According to Sandefur, a "nationwide movement of teacher accountability through [state-mandated] testing," began with the Louisiana Acts of 1977. As indicated in figure 1, the movement reached its peak in the period from 1980-1984 when twenty-eight states mandated beginning teacher testing. Prior to that time, only ten states had such a requirement; since that time eight states have joined the movement.

In addition, self-governance for the teaching profession has been a goal for many years. For example, the National Education Association (NEA) initiated a plan of action in 1961 to establish autonomous professional boards for the purpose of determining standards for teacher preparation programs and entry to the profession. To date, there are statutorily mandated organizations responsible for conducting research and formulating recommendations for various issues in teacher education in twenty-one states. In fifteen additional states, there are advisory boards with no statutory basis.

Hopefully, the Carnegie Board will be more successful in attaining the interrelated goals of professional autonomy and high standards for teacher certification than the above-noted efforts. Nevertheless, whatever is accomplished at the national level, it is certain policymakers at the state level will continue to influence standards for entry to teaching.

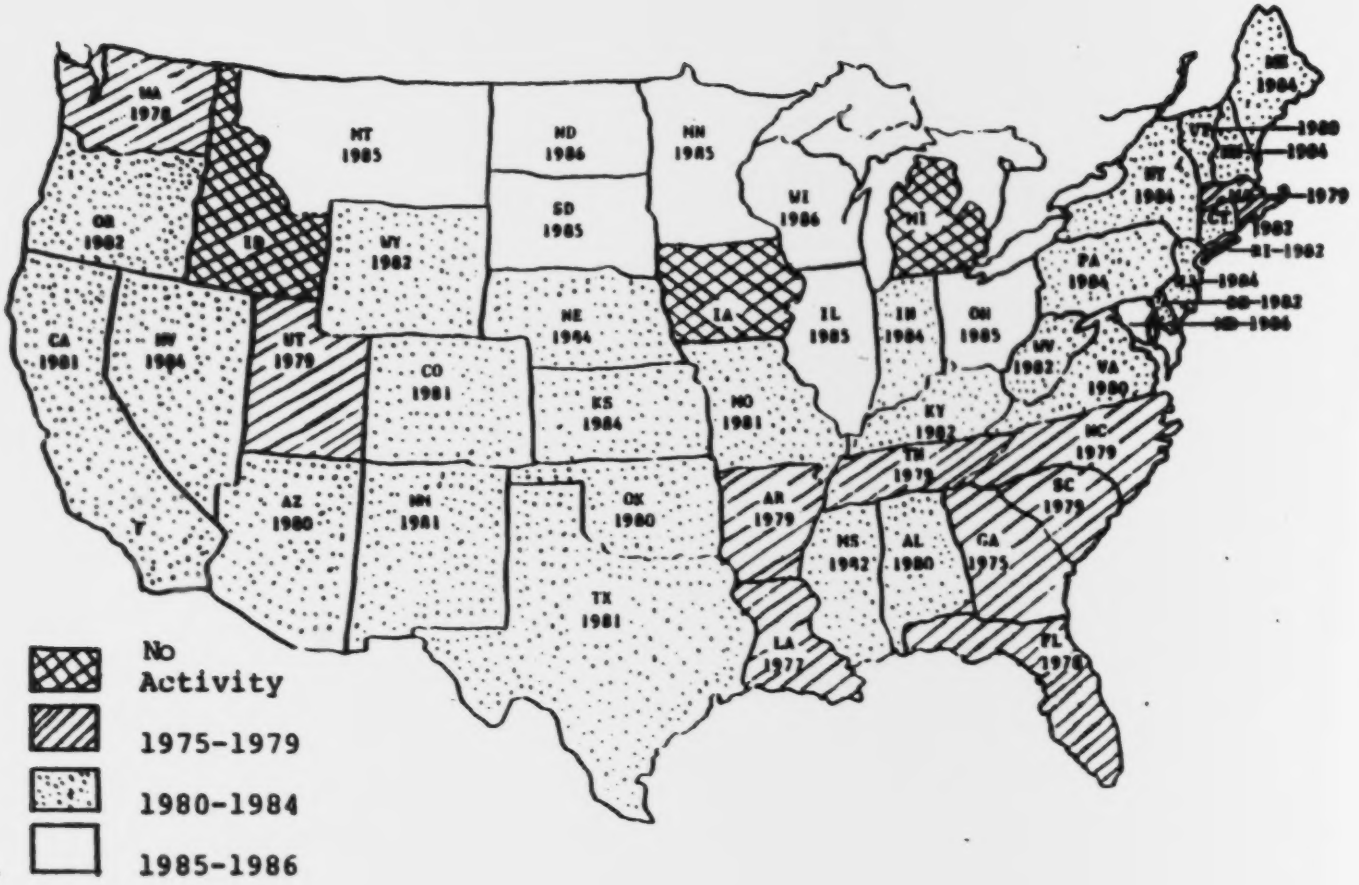

Fig. 1. Dates and patterns of adoption among states of mandates for some form of teacher competency assessment: 1986.

SOURCE: Dates derived from J. T. Sandefur, "Competency Assessment of Teachers: The 1986 Report," Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, 1986, p. 3.

NOTE : Hawaii's first competency assessment activity was in 1984; there is no competency assessment in Alaska.

The study to be highlighted in this presentation focuses on state-level reform efforts during the past decade, particularly teacher competency assessment policies. It is hoped that the findings of this study will inform continued reform efforts at both state and national levels.

Sandefur's 1986 report notes that only four states did not have some requirement for teacher competency assessment. When these requirements were examined for this study, the findings matched those of a 1984 National Institute of Education (NIE) study conducted by Goertz, Ekstrom, and Coley. They found that while most states have "enacted additional policies designed to assess the capabilities of individual teachers," the policies used varied considerably from state to state in "the number of assessments made, the areas covered by the assessments, and the criteria used to set minimum standards."

In my study I sought to explain the variation among states with respect to two of the three differences cited in the NIE report--the number of assessments made and the areas covered by assessments. The questions the study addressed included: (1) How restrictive are state policies beyond coursework for entering the teaching profession? (2) How do states vary on restrictions for entry to the teaching profession? (3) Are there regional patterns of policy restrictiveness? (4) What do the findings suggest about the relation of political groups and structure to policy restrictiveness? (5) Are there patterns of state

characteristics associated with restrictive policies, and do these vary by region? and (6) What do the findings suggest about the professionalization of teaching?

Study Model

Four policy measures were used in this study to score states on restrictiveness of policies for entry to teaching (figure 2). These included measures of state policies at three distinct points in the process of achieving a professional teaching certificate: entry to the study of teacher education; granting of the initial teaching certificate; and granting of the regular or professional teaching certificate. These decision points in the preparation of teachers are similar to critical junctures in other professions wherein test and grade point averages are used to screen students for admission purposes; examinations determine the candidate's competence to practice; and induction periods, residencies, or internships are required prior to bestowing full professional credentials.

The fourth measure in my study is the rigor of state policies for allowing persons to teach who have not fulfilled normal state requirements for obtaining a teaching certificate, a procedure with many labels, herein called "emergency certification." While the first three measures address formal policy regulations, the fourth measure indicates discretionary restrictiveness afforded state policymakers and the extent to which formal policies can be circumvented.

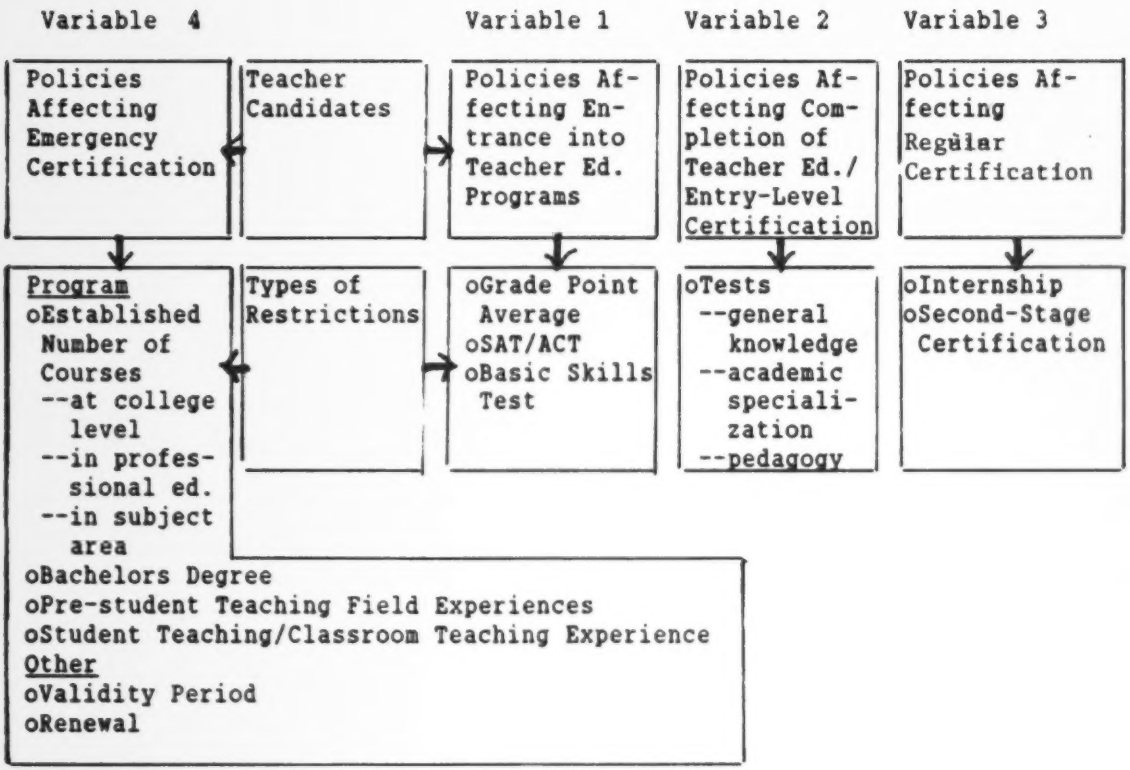

Fig. 2. Model for scoring dependent variables -- state policies restricting entry to teaching.

State characteristics selected for the study and tested for their relation to policy restrictiveness included political, environmental, and educational policy measures. Political measures were chosen for their relevance to theories that might explain the source of political power underlying the absence or presence of restrictive policies, namely, the power of groups representing the education profession; professional legislatures; or a unified social, economic, and political governing elite.

Three measures were included in the study to indicate the political power of the education profession: the composition and power, considered separately, of professional standards boards for teachers (PSBs); and the strength of the National Education Association, as measured by the number of teachers who are members of NEA state affiliates. To indicate whether legislators were the primary source of political power behind restrictive policies, in contrast to an interest group or unified elite, an index of legislative professionalism was used to measure the capability, independence, and responsiveness of state legislatures.

Finally, states' political cultures were measured to indicate the likelihood that a unified social, economic, political, and educational elite was the primary group behind the enactment of restrictive policies. This study used a political culture configuration developed by Daniel Elazar wherein states with a "traditionalistic" type of political

culture are typically governed by a unified political elite within a non-participatory political process and tend not to be associated with new program initiatives. At the other end of the political culture continuum are states with a "moralistic" type of political culture characterized by a more participatory political process shared by several elite groups inclined toward initiating new programs for the common good (table 1).

For purposes of analysis, the ten environmental and educational policy measures were organized into three groups: measures indicating the need for public school teachers; measures indicating the valuation of public education; and school racial indicators (figure 3). Findings about the relation of states' political, environmental, and educational policy characteristics to policy restrictiveness were analyzed for patterns indicating possible intent for restrictive policies.

Before findings are discussed, several caveats regarding data collection should be noted. States' restrictiveness scores are based on policies that are statewide in nature, that is, if they resulted from legislation or board of education mandates applicable to all teacher candidates at all higher education institutions, publicly or privately supported. Where policymaking bodies were in the process of considering specific recommendations for legislation or mandates, states were given partial scores for restrictiveness.

TABLE 1

STATE POLITICAL CULTURES

Section	M		MI		IM		I		IT		TI		T		TM
New England	VT	ME	NH		CT	MA									
						RI									
Middle						NY		DE							
Atlantic							PA	MD							
							NJ								
Near West		MI				OH*									
		WI				IL*	IN								
Northwest	MN		IA	MT	NE										
		ND	KS	SD	WY										
		CO													
Far West	UT	OR	CA	ID			NV								
			WA												
Southwest									MO		TX				AZ
											OK	NM			
Upper South											WV		VA		NC
											KY			TN	
Lower South											FL	AL	SC		
												GA	MS		
												AR			
												LA			
Pacific							AK		HI						

*Illinois and Ohio have strong traces of M in their northern counties and T in their southern counties.

(continued)

TABLE 1--Continued

SOURCE: Daniel J. Elazar, American Federalism: A View From the States, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1984), p. 136, table 5.2. Reprinted with permission of Harper and Row.

NOTES:

1) M: Moralistic dominant.
MI: Moralistic dominant, strong Individualistic strain.
IM: Individualistic dominant, strong Moralistic strain.
I: Individualistic dominant.
IT: Individualistic dominant, strong Traditionalistic strain.
TI: Traditionalistic dominant, strong Individualistic strain.
T: Traditionalistic dominant.
TM: Traditionalistic dominant, strong Moralistic strain.

2) The eight columns in the table should be viewed as segments on a forced continuum that actually has elements of circularity. The specific placing of the individual states should be viewed cautiously, considering the limits of the data.

Variables	Categories of Variables			
	Education Profession		Legislature	Unified Elite
Political	PSB Composition PSB Power	% Teachers Who are NEA Members	Legislative Professionalism	Traditionalistic Political Culture
Environmental/ Education Policy	Need for Teachers % Change Elementary School Enrollment 1972-1982 % Change Elementary School Enrollment 1963-1972 Student-Teacher Ratio, 1982 % Change Student-Teacher Ratio, 1972-1982 % Private School Enrollment	Valuation of Education % Population with Four or More Years College Expenditure Public School Education as % of State Total Budget Teachers' Salaries as % of Personal Income Per Pupil Expenditure % Private School Enrollment		Racial Indicators % Black Public School Enrollment % Private School Enrollment

Fig. 3. Independent variables grouped according to categories of variables.

As it is likely that teacher competency assessment measures enacted after the publication of A Nation at Risk in 1983 were a reflection more of national trends than internal state political dynamics, state restrictiveness scores were based on legislation or mandates in place by January 1984. Finally, scores were based on policies applicable to prospective elementary-level teachers to avoid the confusion of attempting to differentiate between state policies according to multiple grade levels.

Regression analysis was used to find those state characteristics most closely associated with restrictive policies and to test the relative importance of political measures and the need, valuation, and race categories of measures for explaining restrictive policies. Regional groupings of states were also examined for ways in which groups of states diverted from the national model.

Findings

The following findings are reported as significant when a critical level of $p = .05$ or less has been met. Unlike other professions studied, restrictiveness, as measured in this study, is not unidimensional. Results of correlation analyses among the four measures of policy restrictiveness indicated that deriving a single restrictiveness score for each state (by simply summing scores of the four policy measures) was not appropriate. While two of the measures--requirements to enter teacher education and requirements to begin teaching (initial

certification)--are moderately related, the same is not true for the remaining two measures. In fact, the emergency certification measure is negatively correlated with measures of requirements to enter teacher education and requirements to begin teaching. This finding indicates that in the same states where more restrictive formal entry policies exist, emergency certificates may be used as a route to circumvent these policies when desired.

For the remaining analyses, the two moderately related measures were combined to form a scale: requirements to enter teacher education and requirements to begin teaching. The remaining two measures--requirements for second-stage/regular certification and requirements for emergency certification--were retained as separate measures.

When states are grouped according to their restrictiveness scores on each measure (tables 2, 3, 4), the analysis reveals that in most states the application of restrictiveness across policy measures is inconsistent. Only five states have restrictive scores on all measures, while in fourteen, scores are not restrictive on any. Further, the analysis reveals that, despite nationwide publicity about newly restrictive policies, most states do not have very restrictive scores on any measure. Finally, the analysis shows that state restrictiveness scores follow a sectional pattern. Southern states are more restrictive according to more policy measures than are Northern or Western states.

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF FIFTY STATES IN HIGH, LOW, AND MIDDLE GROUPS ACCORDING TO SCORES ON REQUIREMENTS TO ENTER TEACHER EDUCATION AND TO BEGIN TEACHING

Low	Middle		High
	Low	High	
Alaska (P)	California (FW)	*Arkansas (LS)	*Alabama (LS)
Idaho (FW)	Colorado (N)	*Georgia (LS)	Arizona (S)
Illinois (NW)	Connecticut (NE)	Hawaii (P)	*Florida (LS)
Iowa (N)	**Delaware (MA)	**Missouri (S)	**Kentucky (US)
Maine (NE)	Indiana (NW)	Montana (N)	*Louisiana (LS)
Michigan (NW)	Kansas (N)	New Jersey (MA)	*Mississippi (LS)
Minnesota (N)	**Maryland (MA)	New Mexico (S)	*North Carolina (LS)
North Dakota (N)	Massachusetts (NE)	New York (MA)	*Tennessee (US)
Pennsylvania (MA)	Nebraska (N)	**Oklahoma (S)	
Rhode Island (NE)	Nevada (FW)	*South Carolina (LS)	
Utah (FW)	New Hampshire (NE)	*Texas (S)	
Vermont (NE)	Ohio (NW)	*Virginia (US)	
Wyoming (N)	Oregon (FW)	**West Virginia (US)	
	South Dakota (N)		
	Washington (FW)		
	Wisconsin (NW)		

NOTE: Sectional locations according to Daniel J. Elazar, American Federalism: A View From the States, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1984), p. 136, table 5.2.: NE=New England; MA=Middle Atlantic; NW=Near West; N=Northwest; FW=Far West; S=Southwest; US= Upper South; LS=Lower South; P=Pacific.

*Members of the Confederacy.

**These states, in addition to the Confederate states, mandated separate but equal schools by law for Black and White students prior to Brown v. Board of Education (1954).

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF FIFTY STATES IN HIGH, LOW, AND MIDDLE GROUPS ACCORDING TO SCORES ON REQUIREMENTS FOR SECOND-STAGE CERTIFICATION

Low	Middle		High
	Low	High	
*Alabama (LS)	California (FW)	Hawaii (P)	*Florida (LS)
Alaska (P)	Connecticut (NE)	Kansas (N)	*Georgia (LS)
Arizona (S)	**Delaware (MA)	*Louisiana (LS)	**Kentucky (US)
*Arkansas (LS)	Indiana (NW)	Minnesota (N)	*North Carolina(US)
Colorado (N)	Iowa (N)	New Hampshire(NE)	**Oklahoma (S)
Idaho (FW)	Maine (NE)	New Mexico (S)	*South Carolina(LS)
Illinois (NW)	**Maryland (MA)	North Dakota (N)	*Virginia (US)
Massachusetts (NE)	Michigan (NW)	Ohio (NW)	
*Mississippi (LS)	Montana (N)	Oregon (FW)	
**MIssouri (S)	Nebraska (N)	*Texas (S)	
Nevada (FW)	New York (MA)	Vermont (NE)	
New Jersey (MA)	Pennsylvania (MA)	Washington (FW)	
South Dakota (N)	Rhode Island (NE)		
*Tennessee (US)	Utah (FW)		
**West Virginia (US)	Wyoming (N)		
Wisconsin (NW)			

NOTE: Sectional locations according to Elazar, American Federalism, p. 136, table 5.2.: NE=New England; MA=Middle Atlantic; NW=Near West; N=Northwest; FW=Far West; S=Southwest; US= Upper South; LS=Lower South; P=Pacific.

*Members of the Confederacy.

**These states, in addition to the Confederate states, mandated separate but equal schools by law for Black and White students prior to Brown v. Board of Education (1954).

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF FIFTY STATES IN HIGH, LOW, AND MIDDLE GROUPS ACCORDING TO SCORES ON REQUIREMENTS FOR EMERGENCY CERTIFICATION

Low	Middle		High
	Low	High	
*Alabama (SE)	Alaska (P)	Arizona (S)	Illinois (NW)
California (FW)	Colorado (N)	*Arkansas (LS)	Iowa (N)
**Delaware (MA)	*Florida (LS)	Connecticut (NE)	Kansas (N)
Hawaii (P)	*Louisiana (LS)	*Georgia (LS)	Nevada (FW)
Indiana (NW)	Maine (NE)	Idaho (FW)	Oregon (FW)
**Kentucky (US)	**Maryland (MA)	*Mississippi (LS)	*Virginia (US)
Massachusetts (NE)	Michigan (NW)	**Missouri (S)	Wyoming (N)
Montana (N)	Minnesota (N)	New Hampshire (NE)	
New Jersey (MA)	Nebraska (N)	Ohio (NW)	
New York (MA)	New Mexico (S)	**Oklahoma (S)	
*North Carolina (US)	North Dakota (N)	*South Carolina (LS)	
Pennsylvania (MA)	Rhode Island (NE)	*Tennessee (US)	
South Dakota (N)	Wisconsin (NW)	*Texas (S)	
Vermont (NE		Utah (FW)	
		Washington (FW)	
		**West Virginia (US)	

NOTE: Sectional locations according to Elazar, American Federalism, p. 136, table 5.2.: NE=New England; MA=Middle Atlantic; NW=Near West; N=Northwest; FW=Far West; S=Southwest; US= Upper South; LS=Lower South; P=Pacific.

*Members of the Confederacy.

**These states, in addition to the Confederate states, mandated separate but equal schools by law for Black and White students prior to Brown v. Board of Education (1954).

Explaining State Policy Differences

The results of this study show that factors explaining differences in state policies restricting entry to teacher education programs and issuance of the initial teaching certificate were different from those explaining restrictiveness for granting emergency certificates. There were no significant factors explaining second-stage/regular certification policy differences among the states. The following paragraphs summarize findings when regression analyses were performed on each of the three policy measures using four categories of variables--political, need for teachers, valuation of education, and school racial composition--to ascertain the relative explanatory value of each category of variables for each policy measure when fifty states are included in the analyses.

Policies Restricting Entry to Teacher Education Programs and Initial Certification

The study's findings indicated that the most restrictive policies are found in states where the policymaking process is governed by a unified elite--that is, where states have traditionalistic political cultures. Correspondingly, the least restrictive policies are found in states with moralistic political cultures, typified by a more pluralistic policymaking process, and conducive to the input of strong education departments and educational interest groups.

School racial composition is also important for explaining state policy variations. States with higher proportions of Black students enacted more restrictive policies. Finally, states with lower educational expenditure and achievement levels are more restrictive.

Policies Related to Second-Stage Certification

Unlike the first policy measure, there is no clear pattern among the categories of variables explaining differences in state policies for second-stage certification. One explanation for this finding is the minimal activity that had taken place among the states in this policy area at the time of data collection.

Policies Restricting the Issuance of Emergency Certificates

Measures of the need for teachers are the most important for explaining variations in state policies restricting emergency certification. Restrictions decrease when student-teacher ratios increase, indicating a greater need for teachers. These findings, and the fact that requirements for emergency certification tend to be less restrictive when requirements for initial certification are more restrictive, suggest that state policies restricting emergency certification serve the purely utilitarian purpose of circumventing regular certification procedures in times of need for teachers.

Regional Variations

The uniqueness of Southern states with respect to both policy restrictiveness for entry to teaching and many state characteristics included in this study suggested the need for separate analyses of Southern and non-Southern states. Southern states, in this study, are equated with the eleven Confederate states.

There are significant differences in factors explaining restrictiveness between Southern and non-Southern states as well as within these state groups. While traditionalistic political culture is an important factor associated with differences in restrictiveness for entry level policies for all state groups, it does not explain differences among Southern states, all of which have traditionalistic political cultures. Race explains differences in restrictiveness for entry-level policies between Southern and non-Southern states, but not among non-Southern states when they are considered separately. All Southern states are associated with large proportions of Black enrollment in the public schools.

Valuation of education explains differences in restrictiveness for entry-level policies between Southern and non-Southern states and among Southern states. It is not associated with differences among non-Southern states when they are considered separately. Finally, need is highly related to differences in policy restrictiveness for emergency certification between Southern and non-Southern states and

among non-Southern states. It is not associated with differences among Southern states in this policy area when they are considered separately (table 5).

TABLE 5
REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN FACTORS EXPLAINING POLICY DIFFERENCES AMONG GROUPS OF STATES

Factors Explaining Differences Among States	Policies Restricting Entry to Teacher Education and Initial Certification		
	All States	Non-Southern States	Southern States
	Traditionalistic Political Culture	Traditionalistic Political Culture	Valuation of Education
	Valuation of Education		
	Race		
	Policies Restricting the Issuance of Emergency Certificates		
	All States	Non-Southern States	Southern States
	Need for Teachers	Need for Teachers	None

With the Southern states as a group, entry level restrictions are associated with strongly traditionalistic cultures, large Black public school enrollments, and low expenditure levels for education. Valuation of education measures explain the most about differences in restrictiveness among these states. The most restrictive policies are found in states spending the least on public (and private) education and with the lowest proportion of college-educated individuals. (When non-Southern states are considered as a group, entry-level restrictions are associated only with traditionalistic political cultures.)

These generalizations about the South as a region blur some interesting distinctions between Southern states. In some states with restrictive policies, there are strong groups of professional educators and professional legislatures and also improvements in educational expenditures, albeit from a very low base, over the past decade. The analysis also showed that Southern states generally have a more consistent approach to entry restrictive- ness, particularly in the area of requirements for second-stage certification.

Political Groups and Structure and Policy Restrictiveness

Professional groups, as measured in this study, are not found to be associated with policy restrictiveness. Instead, the close association of traditionalistic political cultures with restrictiveness indicates these policies are the result of actions taken by a unified elite in an oligarchic policymaking environment where professional groups are weak.

There are several findings of interest in this study related to the education profession. First, the size of membership in the largest professional teachers' association in the country, the National Education Association, is not related to the strength of composition or power of a state's professional standards board. This is particularly surprising given NEA's multiple efforts to establish autonomous standards boards for teachers in every state.

Although not as powerful as expected, the NEA was nevertheless a force in preventing restrictive policies in states receptive to educational interest groups. Its influence was observed to be effective only for policies restricting entry to teacher education programs and initial certification. It appeared to have little influence on the restrictiveness of policies related to second-stage certification and was unable or did not choose to counteract the influence of need for teachers on the restrictiveness of emergency certification policies.

In only one case, using regression analysis, was PSB composition or power found to be a significant factor influencing state policy choices. More restrictive policies for second-stage certification were associated with more powerful PSBs when the seventeen Southern and border states were considered separately. Of interest also, when the most and least restrictive states were compared on measures for emergency certification, findings indicated that states with the most restrictive policies have the highest proportion of educators on professional standards boards.

Conclusions about Restrictiveness and the Professionalization of Teaching

Although the teacher competency movement often is described in terms associated with the goal of professionalization, the patterns of relationship uncovered by this study suggest that something other than professionalization is

involved. The implications are that policymakers, by and large, have enacted an incomplete set of quick-fix and relatively inexpensive policies in an effort to placate the public and attract new business and industry. The association of low educational expenditure levels with states leading the competency assessment movement suggests that the newly restrictive policies afford policymakers a way to respond to public concerns in states without the means or desire to substantially increase educational funding.

This study found that, in contrast to other professional occupations, states do not have a consistent set of policies restricting entry to the teaching occupation. Most states emphasized restrictions either at the point of entry to teacher education programs or prior to initial certification. States requiring assessment of candidates beyond the initial certificate were few, and policies restricting access to emergency certificates were flexible and permissive.

While a state's need for teachers was not a significant factor for determining the restrictiveness of policies at the initial entry points, it was the most important factor related to the strength of policies restricting emergency certificates. Competency assessment thus afforded policymakers a double standard for teacher quality--one determined during times of sufficient supply of those meeting new, more rigorous entry requirements, and one applicable during times of shortage of these same candidates.

Past studies have repeatedly shown that competency assessment measures, which rely primarily on testing, have screened potential Black candidates from the teacher workforce in disproportionate numbers. In light of this, the finding that it is those states that have the highest racial concentrations that have jumped most emphatically on the restrictiveness bandwagon is disconcerting.

Conclusions from the study's findings are not that assessment measures are unnecessary or undesirable, but rather that current policies are not accomplishing the goal of professionalizing teaching as originally promised. Further, although the study's findings indicated that educators have been successful in resisting the enactment of extensive assessment measures in some states, that resistance has often been interpreted by the public as demonstrating an inability or unwillingness to set high entry standards for prospective teachers.

The recommendation resulting from this study is neither new nor easy to achieve: To avoid some of the pitfalls of past reform efforts, educators and policymakers must work together to achieve standards that are fair, comprehensive, and in the public interest--which can be expected occasionally to diverge from professional interest.

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